

Message Text

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PAGE 01 RABAT 01011 170908Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 HA-05 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00
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C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 1011

E. O. XGDS-1
TAGS: SHUM, MO
SUBJ: PRISONERS' HUNGER STRIKE RESUMES

REF: A) 77 RABAT 7058 (NOTAL) B) RABAT 0493 C) RABAT A-03 OF
FEB 10, 1978

1. SOME OF THE 139 EXTREME LEFTISTS SENTENCED IN EARLY 1977
RESUMED THEIR HUNGER STRIKE ON FEBRUARY 2. THEY ARE REPORTEDLY
CLAIMING THAT MINISTER OF JUSTICE MAATI BOUABID, IN HIS JANUARY 13
INTERVIEW, BROKE CERTAIN "PROMISES" HE HAD MADE IN DECEMBER WHICH
HAD INDUCED THEM TO END THE STRIKE, AND THAT HIS DECLARATION REPRESENTED A GENERAL HARDENING OF THE GOM POSITION ON POLITICAL PRISONERS. ACCORDING TO A USFP (SOCIALIST OPPOSITION PARTY) SOURCE WHO IS A MEMBER OF THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY, THE PRISONERS ARE NOW DEMANDING THAT A SPECIAL STATUTE BE ENACTED TO COVER THE INCARCERATION OF POLITICAL PRISONERS. (BOUABID HAD REJECTED THIS IDEA IN HIS INTERVIEW.) AS A RESULT OF THE NEW STRIKE THE AUTHORITIES HAVE TRANSFERRED THE PRISONERS FROM THE HOSPITALS AND DISPERSED ALL OF THE 139 TO PRISONS THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. THIS ACT HAS LED TO A NEW PRISONER DEMAND THAT THEY BE REUNITED IN ONE PRISON. NOT ALL OF THE 139 PRISONERS ARE TAKING PART, NOR ARE ANY DETAINED USFP ADHERENTS PARTICIPATING. ONE NOTABLE ABSTAINEE
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PAGE 02 RABAT 01011 170908Z

FROM THE STRIKE IS ABRAHIM SERFATY. THE COMMITTEE OF INQUIRY HAS BEEN RECONVENED AND A MEETING OF MEMBERS OF THAT COMMITTEE WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STRIKERS IS SET FOR FEBRUARY 17 IN CASABLANCA.

2. THE USFP SOURCE SUGGESTED THAT THE CURRENT SITUATION WAS
"VERY DIFFICULT". THE STRIKERS WERE INTENT ON CREATING "MARTYRS" AND

WERE POSING "IMPOSSIBLE" DEMANDS. MOROCCO COULD NOT AFFORD THE LUXURY OF SEPARATE FACILITIES AND TREATMENT FOR ONE CATEGORY OF PRISONERS. USFP WAS IN AN QUANDRY, FOR IT REMAINED COMMITTED TO THE CAUSE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS FOR IDEOLOGICAL AND HUMANITARIAN REASONS AND WAS CONCERNED FOR MOROCCO'S IMAGE ABROAD. ALSO, THE FAMILIES OF THE 139 WERE VERY ACTIVE AND WERE PUTTING GREAT PRESSURE ON THE PARTY TO HELP.

3. COMMENT: USFP'S QUANDRY OVER THE EXTREME LEFTISTS IS WIDELY SHARED ACROSS THE POLITICAL SPECTRUM. THERE IS BROAD SUPPORT FOR RELEASE OF ALL POLITICAL PRISONERS, BUT THE VIEWS OF THE STRIKING DETAINEES ARE CLEARLY OUTSIDE THE MAINSTREAM OF MOROCCAN POLITICAL THOUGHT AND NOT JUST ON THE SAHARA (ON WHICH THEY HAVE TAKEN A PRO-ALGERIAN STAND).
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